

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY PARIS NIACT IMMEDIATE
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INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI IMMEDIATE
WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE 0237

S E C R E T STATE 125187

NODIS
MILITARY ADDEE HANDLE AS SPECATEXCLUSIVE; WH-DR. BRZEZINSKI

E.O. 11652: XGDS

TAGS: MAPS, PINS, CACS, CG

SUBJECT: SHABA INCURSION - POSSIBLE RESCUE EFFORT

1. REUTERS (AND OTHER AFTERNOON PRESS) CARRYING FOLLOWING:
QUOTE: WASHINGTON, MAY 16 - U.S. PARATROOPERS AND TRANS-
PORT PLANES HAVE BEEN PLACED ON ALERT FOR A POSSIBLE
EVACUATION OF AMERICANS AND OTHER FOREIGN NATIONALS FROM
ZAIRE, DEFENSE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS SAID TONIGHT. UNQUOTE.

2. CLEARED PRESS GUIDANCE (WHICH WILL ALSO BE USED WITH
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A NUMBER OF AFRICAN COUNTRIES AS NEEDED) STATES THAT:
"SOME UNITS OF THE 82ND AIRBORNE HAVE BEEN PLACED ON AN
INCREASED ALERT STATUS. NO UNITS ARE DEPLOYED. THIS IS A
NORMAL AND REASONABLE PRECAUTION TAKEN WHEN AMERICAN
CITIZENS ARE LOCATED IN A REMOTE AREA WHERE CONFLICT IS
OCCURRING. IT SHOULD BE SEEN AS THAT AND NO MORE."

3. YOU SHOULD APPROACH HIGHEST APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES OF HOST GOVERNMENTS AT EARLIEST POSSIBLE MOMENT TO SET FORTH OUR THINKING, DRAWING ON FOREGOING FROM THE PUBLIC DOMAIN AND ON FOLLOWING WHICH WE REQUEST BE HELD MOST CLOSELY.

4. WE ARE FOLLOWING SITUATION IN SHABA WITH ATTENTION AND CONCERN, LIMITED AS WE ALL ARE BY PAUCITY OF HARD INFORMATION. WE HAVE PLACED THESE UNITS ON INCREASED ALERT STATUS AT THIS TIME GIVEN OUR IMPRESSION THAT SITUATION AT KOLWEZI IS WORSENING AND GIVEN, FURTHER, THE SUBSTANTIAL LEAD TIMES NECESSARY SHOULD IT EVENTUALLY BE DECIDED THAT AN EVACUATION NEED BE CARRIED OUT IN A POTENTIALLY HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT. WHILE WE STRESS THAT NO RPT DECISION HAS BEEN TAKEN THAT THIS IS OR WILL BE NECESSARY, OUR CONTINGENCY PREPARATIONS CONTINUE.

5. IN THIS CONTEXT WE ARE AWARE THAT, GIVEN SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF BELGIAN AND FRENCH CITIZENS REPORTED PRESENT IN KOLWEZI, A COLLABORATIVE, RATHER THAN UNILATERAL, EFFORT MAY PROVE TO BE INDICATED. WE WISH FRENCH AND BELGIANS TO KNOW THAT WE HAVE THIS IN MIND, AND THAT WE MAY FIND IT NECESSARY IN NEAR FUTURE TO SUGGEST SOME FORM OF JOINT PLANNING. AS THIS CONSIDERATION, IN ITSELF, WILL PLAY A ROLE IN OUR EVOLVING THOUGHT ON HOW BEST TO DEAL WITH KOLWEZI SITUATION, WE WOULD APPRECIATE HAVING AN INDICATION FROM THEM AS TO WHETHER THEIR THINKING MAY BE PARASECRET

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LLELING OURS AND WHETHER THEY MAY BE RECEPTIVE TO SUCH SUGGESTION IF IN FACT MADE.

6. FYI: DOD OFFICIALS HAVE DISCUSSED THE MATTER WITH BELGIAN AND FRENCH SENIOR MILITARY ATTACHES IN WASHINGTON. VANCE

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